

SOCIAL ACTION News-Letter

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THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY AND THE ATOMIC BOMB

What has the Christian minister to say on the subject of the atomic bomb—nothing at all? Must laymen turn now for their moral and spiritual guidance to the atomic scientists, State Department officials and army communiques? Or does the Christian ministry still have a responsibility to speak honestly and courageously—at least as courageously as some of our atomic scientists—on one of the most crucial problems of our day?

To even pose such a question is virtually to answer it. Wherever spiritual issues arise the Christian minister is duty bound to offer such guidance as he can and to speak out clearly on the questions involved. Why, then, have we heard so little from the ministry in recent years upon this matter? The answer we would guess is two-fold. First, most ministers have not known enough of the facts involved to feel qualified to speak. Second, and more significant, most ministers have probably not faced all the issues involved and made up their own minds.

Where is the minister to get the necessary facts in a form that he can understand them? The best source that we can suggest that would bring the minister current and authoritative information and frank discussions of the ethical, social, and strategic issues involved written by qualified persons is the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists published by the Educational Foundation for Nuclear Science, Inc., 5750 Ellis Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois. The subscription rate is \$5.00 per year and a sample copy of the magazine can be secured by writing to the above address.

The more important matter of the minister's own decision cannot be dealt with quite so simply. This decision will only come when the minister sits down in the quiet of his study and begins to honestly ask himself some questions. Among them must be such questions as the following:

- Is my thinking in the area of war and peace based primarily upon the will of God as revealed in the person of Jesus Christ or primarily in the conviction that only as we preserve our nation and western civilization may we save anything worth holding on to.

- Does the existence of a world-wide Church of Christ with members in

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MID-WEST CONFERENCE POSTPONED

It is with extreme regret that the Department of Social Welfare announces the postponement of the Mid-West Conference on Problems of Alcohol scheduled to be held at Christian College, Columbia Missouri, June 21-25, 1954.

A number of circumstances have conspired to make this step necessary, including an unusual number of conferences of our own brotherhood, the preoccupation of many church leaders with the forthcoming Evanston Conference of the World Council of Churches, and other factors, such as the general economic situation. But the simplest explanation is that not enough registrations have been received to make it possible to go ahead with plans.

The administration of Christian College and the people of Columbia have been most cordial and helpful, but a minimum number of registrations is necessary to justify holding over for a week the working staff of the college and that minimum number is not in sight.

It goes without saying that registration fees paid in will be returned and that financial adjustments will be made with resource personnel whose time we reserved for the conference.

We gave to the project the best publicity and promotion we know how to give.

We believe that Disciples of Christ are concerned about the immense toll that alcohol is taking of this generation and that when the conference is announced for a later time the response will be commensurate to the challenge.

To all who have helped in this project, to Christian College and to Dr. Stephen D. Smith, of Columbia, Missouri, acting director of the Missouri Committee for Education of Alcoholism, we extend our sincere thanks.

JAMES A. CRAIN
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY.

"THIRTY"

Since this is the last issue of Social Action News-Letter in which my name will appear at the mast-head, and as the only person whose association with it dates from the first issue, I am taking the liberty of using this issue for a final personal word. My first thought was to title this communication something like "Farewell" or "Valedictory," but both seem a bit too formal. Hence the newspaperman's "Thirty" to signify the end of the story.

Social Action News-Letter, like Topsy, "jes growed." It began in the mid-thirties as an occasional mimeographed bulletin on issues which seemed of sufficient importance to be brought to the attention of the churches. For some years I had been contributing a weekly page to *Front Rank* under the heading, "Building a Happier World," and a page each month to *World Call* dealing with social issues. When editorial leadership and policies changed and the page in *Front Rank* was dropped and the *World Call* page reduced to a single column, the need for a regular publication became acute. The first issue was dated December 1937, no copy of which, unfortunately, exists in our files. It has been issued regularly every month since, except for the usual July-August joint issue.

A cursory examination of early files shows that the publication has held steadily to the course it mapped out for itself at the beginning—that of keeping pastors and churches aware of current social issues and attempting to interpret their meaning. It has sought to state facts and to take stands. It has never sounded an uncertain note, whether it was dealing with Mussolini, Hitler, Neville Chamberlain, or McCarthy. It has not always been right but at least it has always been forthright. It has not had as large a circulation as could be desired, but its friends have given it consistent support.

As I turn over responsibility for *Social Action News-Letter* to Barton Hunter, my successor as executive secretary of the department and editor, I do so with deep satisfaction and perfect confidence that the publication will move on to ever greater usefulness. To the departmental staff, which has been built up under my administration, I owe a great debt of gratitude for loyalty and cooperation. I know that both the department and the News-Letter will prosper in their competent hands.

JAMES A. CRAIN

SOCIAL ACTION NEWS-LETTER

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GOD'S ANGRY BISHOP

I Protest. My Experience with the House Committee on Un-American Activities, G. Bromley Oxnam, Harper & Bros., \$2.50.

Bishop Oxnam is an angry man. And in the opinion of this reviewer, after having read the verbatim transcript of the proceedings of the Committee at the session on July 21, 1953, justifiably so. After having suffered for seven years from the released "information" about his alleged Communist front activities; after having tried in vain to get the Committee to clear his file of false statements, misinformation, unsupported allegations, innuendoes and plain smears; and having been advised by Committee chairman Velde that his only recourse was a hearing before the Committee, Bishop Oxnam demanded a hearing.

What happened on that hot July day when at 2 p. m. he and his counsel (who was permitted only to give his name and cite his membership in the New York bar) appeared is a discreditable episode in American history. In a tightly crowded hearing room, which overflowed into the hallway and up the stairway, Rep. Jackson had reserved front row seats for a group of Clyde McIntyre's so-called American Council of churches, an organization that boasts of "channeling" information to the Committee. Here, Bishop Oxnam sat till midnight facing a blinding array of television lights, subjected to questioning, crossquestioning and interruptions by members of the committee, with only one short recess, during which, he charges, attempts were made to over-hear and spy upon what took place between him and his counsel. Boiled down, Bishop Oxnam charges the House Committee on Un-American Activities and its staff were out to "get" him rather than to get at the facts in his file and to clear it of misinformation.

In *I Protest*, Bishop Oxnam protests nine practices of the Committee—the use of the House floor (where statements are privileged) to defame citizens; procedures that are in effect the

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WASHINGTON ROUND-UP

Glenn D. Everett*

→*McCarthy Hearings* — The McCarthy-Army hearings (or smearings) are dragging on their lusterless way. The only advantage which can be seen by most Washington observers out of these protracted proceedings is that by the medium of television the nation as a whole is at last getting a good look at the way McCarthy operates. When General Miles Reber, one of the most respected officers ever to serve on Capitol Hill, testifies as to the pressure he was placed under by Roy Cohn, the senator retorts with a malicious attack on the General's brother. When Secretary Stevens has the temerity to stick by his guns, he is subjected to a 12-day unnerving ordeal of cross-examination, an object lesson that will not go unheeded by other officials who might think of standing up to the senator from Wisconsin. The central issue is whether Roy Cohn abused his authority as a Senate employee on behalf of his intimate pal, G. David Schine, with the connivance of their mutually intimate friend, the senator. But who remembers that—after all the side issues are thrown in?

It is amazing that the Senate finds it necessary to hold a formal hearing to determine whether Army officials were placed under undue pressure. If 84 telephone calls about a commission for a single private does not constitute *prima facie* evidence of pressure, how many calls do? 94?

→*As Others See Us* — The United States, embroiled as it is in such a controversy, does not always appreciate how shabby such a performance looks to our friends abroad. A realization that the United States has been losing prestige has hit home recently in the higher echelons of the State Department. John Foster Dulles is a very harassed man. He has not been getting support from his own party or from the Democrats, and he has been taking his bumps abroad.

Democrats, through Ex-President Truman and their Congressional leaders, have made it plain that the price of their cooperation is consultation and a halt by administration leaders to the name-calling which insists that the Democrats in their foreign policy were motivated only by thoughts of treason. Ex-Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, got the biggest hand of anyone at the head table at the recent Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner. It was the first time Washington ever heard any really rousing cheers for Acheson. Could it be that the public is now seeing through the abuse that was heaped upon his head, now that a Republican Secretary of Army has become the chief target? Acheson's stock seems on the rise, certainly a political phenomenon.

→*Seaway at Last* — Despite all the attention the sideshow tent has been re-

ceiving, there has been progress in the main arena of Congress. America's participation in the St. Lawrence Seaway has finally been voted, after three lobbies which have opposed it for 3 years gave one more demonstration of their ability to argue to the last ditch that private interest is superior to national interest.

→*Temperance Legislation* — Congress has scheduled public hearings on the bill sponsored by the late Rep. Bryson (D. S. C.) to ban all liquor advertising for interstate commerce. The bill has little chance and the hearing scheduled so late in the session, simply reflects lip service. If the temperance groups were willing to go forward together in smaller steps, they might very well gain some achievements. Rep. Hamer Budge (R. Ida.) for instance, has introduced a bill to ban the drinking of alcoholic beverages by announcers on television commercials. This would be a very constructive step and would gain considerable public support but temperance groups want to take everything at once. Unfortunately, they will probably end up with nothing, and the guzzling sound of smacking lips, and beer jingles will continue to enter American homes via television.

→*"Emancipating" Indians* — Several so-called emancipation bills for American Indians are before Congress. Many Indians have come to the capital to lobby against them. Some dangers in the legislation have been pointed out by former Indian Affairs Commissioner John Collier, who says that long-range programs to bring Indians up to a status of economic equality are threatened. Citing the Seminole bill as an example, he says, "it will subject their lands to taxation which the Indians, because of their poverty, will be unable to pay, thus causing the Indians to lose their land to the whites, and endangering, if not utterly wrecking, the cattle enterprises. And the Seminoles, despite their little education and unfamiliarity with English, will be forced to compete in the white man's highly competitive society, with further poverty, misery, and degradation the only foreseeable consequence."

→*Senator Griswold* — The Senate has lost another able liberal, Sen. Dwight P. Griswold (R. Nebr.), a man who really fought for his convictions in an isolationist state. He fell victim to a heart attack in the prime of his career.

→*Sparkman* — By a margin of 15,000 votes when rural returns were in Sen. Sparkman (D. Ala.) avoided a run-off in a campaign that had been waged against him almost entirely on a bitter racial issue. It was a real victory for the New South that this type of Billboism failed in Alabama.

*Mr. Everett is a Washington correspondent who writes for many religious news services.

ON SOCIAL FRONTIERS

Church Buildings. The U. S. Department of Commerce reports that an estimated \$2,847,000,000 was invested in new religious buildings from 1946 through 1953. This suggests that churches need to be on guard against the subtle pride that often accompanies costly buildings. Masonry, steel, brick and mortar can never be a substitute for service to the needs of people.

Land to the Landless. The unique Land Gift Movement in India inaugurated by Vinoba Bhave, whereby large landowners voluntarily surrender a part of their holdings for distribution to peasants, has exceeded its goal of 500,000 acres by some 407,023 acres, as of March of this year. Bihar Province leads the country with 1,800,000 acres donated. Distribution of the donated land has proceeded more slowly, some 40,343 acres having been given out to 7,959 families. (WP)

Children and TV Programs. A study of family TV habits, with especial reference to children, has recently been completed under the joint sponsorship of the Broadcasting and Film Commission of the National Council of Churches and Yale Divinity School, with Dean Liston Pope as chairman. The study covered 3,500 homes in New Haven, Connecticut and the information was gathered through interviews. The report, when published, will show that New Haven children spend an average of 13 hours per week viewing television, plus some random viewing. The great majority of children's shows reported on were Westerns in which there was an average of 10.5 violent episodes per hour. Some children's programs averaged as high as 25 scenes of violence per hour. A strongly recurrent reaction among parents was that there are too many Westerns and that there are not enough of programs based on the classics, fairy tales, the Bible, and science and the general information field.

Wisconsin Speaks Out. The Wisconsin Council of Churches recently adopted a resolution expressing the fear that increasing abridgement of individual rights may cause Americans to lose faith in constitutional government. A part of the resolution says "We believe that there is no place for one-man investigations or for the release of derogatory files on the discretion of one individual. We believe that we have reason to fear international Communism as a force endeavoring to destroy constitutional government and that its obvious manifestations in propaganda and espionage are only a small part of the danger".

J.A.C.

SUPREME COURT'S DECISION

On May 17, 1954 the Supreme Court of the U. S. announced that segregation in the public schools was unconstitutional. This announcement gives Christians one more tool for the task of tearing down the walls of separation and building anew that fellowship and community that recognizes the worth and contribution of every child of God.

No one—certainly no one who lives in the states most directly affected by the decision—is under any illusion that this newest tool is a magic wand. The problems of providing full, adequate, and complete education for the nation's children will not be touched by waving the Court's decision, however vigorously. It can not even be hoped that now, with the Court on record, we can get down to the serious business of thinking and acting on the fundamental problem of providing adequate education for all our children, for there will be delaying actions. Some have already trumpeted their search for ways to circumvent the intention of the decision. Repeating the formula "segregation has no place in education" will not deter these attempts.

But no one—certainly no one who has watched closely the changes brought in the Negro's situation by Court decisions of the recent past—need fear that the new tool has no cutting edge. Americans, north and south of whatever race are fundamentally law abiding. There are many who have long been convinced that segregation is wrong, who have hesitated to speak or act because it was legal. Now the burden of illegality must be borne by those who would maintain a practice that is in violation of the Constitution. In most communities there are many who have had some experience of studying, living or working without segregation—among them, recent veterans of the armed services, recent graduates of colleges and universities, representatives of labor unions or professional groups, or church organizations. The Court's decision removes the barrier of sharing these experiences with neighbors and opens the way to providing such experiences to more and more children.

The chief value of the decision lies in the declaration that efforts to consign the Negro to inferior education are now illegal. Its chief limitation lies in the fact that of itself the Court's decision provides no education for anyone. Providing education for all the children of the community requires much more than a court decision—even a Supreme Court decision. It requires

a public opinion that is alert and informed on school matters; it requires earnest and serious discussion of the values of public education.

Perhaps this is the place that the churches have the greatest contribution to make to the implementation of the Court's decision—to take the initiative in bringing together citizens of both races to discuss the meaning of the decision for their community; to speak out so that the community may know the concern of the church.

Like the sword of the Lord, this new tool is double edged. In light of the testimony received by the Court in the hearings on the cases, the announced decision was based on the evidence that equal education could not be provided in separate facilities. Chief Justice Warren, in reading the opinion, said that to separate children solely because of race generates feelings in their hearts and minds which might never be undone. The newest tool bites deep into present practices of our churches, the overwhelming majority of which are separating children and adults solely on the basis of race. If such separation has harmful effects in the experiences of public school, are they less harmful in the experiences of public worship?

L.H.D.

IMPLEMENTING THE REFUGEE RELIEF ACT

Despite the restrictive aspects of the 1953 Refugee Relief Act plans are going forward in Church World Service and its sponsoring bodies, and in the World Council abroad, to secure job and housing assurances for refugees who have applied for immigration under the Act. The Disciples are in this program and through the Department of Social Welfare will secure dossiers and process applications. Already it is handling the application of the church at Niantic, Ill., which wishes to sponsor a family with whom it has kept in touch since 1951 when the family was denied visas because of the mother's health. She has now recovered and this church desires to make real the dreams of this good family. Dossiers for the father and mother of a young man we resettled in 1951 are now in the department waiting for job and housing assurances! Would you—or do you know of someone who could help reunite a family by giving them new hope and a new home. Assurance forms, data on specific refugees and on the program are available from the department.

R.E.M.

BREAKTHROUGH ON THE COLOR FRONT

Lee Nichols, Random House, N. Y., \$3.50

This is the story of the changing racial policies and practices of the three branches of the U. S. Armed Services. The author is a re-write man on the night desk of the United Press in Washington. In this book he relates the incidents that are "threads in the pattern of the military achievement, a racial about-face unparalleled in modern history." A dozen years ago segregation of Negroes was the rule in virtually all branches of the service. Most military leaders expected—many wanted—it to stay that way for a long time to come. Yet in 1953 segregation had been officially discarded, and integration of all servicemen, of whatever race or nationality, was the firm policy of every branch of the military service.

The author tells the story of the change and identifies the persons whom he feels were most responsible. One of them is Captain Noel Parrish, "Kentucky-born Air Corps officer, adviser for a Negro Civilian Pilot Program, son of a minister of the Church of the Disciples of Christ." Another is the late Lieutenant Chris Sargent who was the son of an Episcopal minister and "whose influence on Navy racial policies is almost legendary."

From 1949 to 1952 top leaders of the Air Force were committed to working to eliminate segregation as a waste of manpower. By the end of 1952 the Air Force could announce that it was one branch of the Armed Services that did not have any all-Negro components. The late General Vandenberg is quoted as saying that as far as he was concerned, the integration program of the Air Force was not undertaken solely in the interest of military efficiency: "It was a bold attempt to tackle a broad-gauged national problem."

In five years the Navy moved from accepting no Negroes for general service to accepting Negroes on an integrated basis in general service.

The Army in Korea as a necessity first, later as a strategy to meet Communist propaganda on the color issue, finally as a cautious policy, integrated Negro and white soldiers in combat units.

The author visited military installations throughout the U. S. in 1953 to observe the results of the new policy. From his interviews and personal observations he concludes that reaction of both men and officers is acceptance. There are of course still Commanders who do not enforce the non-segregation policy, and there are incidents of person to person discrimination. But the over-all picture is one of more progress than would have been predicted by the most optimistic ten years ago.

Is there a lesson in all this for civilians? More than one Air Force officer thinks so; one of them expressed it, "I always felt it was a mistake to mass them in large groups, in cities or in the services. You get riots when Negroes are massed. When they are permitted to spread, they mix in, according to their ability."

L.H.D.

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY
AND THE ATOMIC BOMB

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China, India, South Africa, Russia, Japan, etc., act in any way as a deterrent on my willingness to follow the political and military leadership of my own country if it should go to war? Can I, as a Christian, war upon my fellow Christians?

- If I believe that under some circumstances a Christian may be justified in participating in war, what are these circumstances?
- Am I prepared as a Christian to accept as necessary whatever decisions the military and political leaders of my nation make when we are in war or in danger of entering war?
- Can I, for example, condone mass indiscriminate bombings of civilian populations?
- If there are points at which I can not justifiably go along with the decisions of my country's leaders what is my Christian duty?
- Having made some decisions of my own do I not have the responsibility to share these decisions along with my Christian reasons for them with the members of my congregation?

B.H.

A SUMMER AMONG MIGRANTS

Seven Disciples of Christ young people have volunteered for service on the summer staff of the Division of Home Missions, NCCC, in the Christian ministry to migrants working in the Midwestern Area. They are: Richard L. Carlson, Hartford Seminary*, Marquerite (Peggy) Cobble, Phillips University, Marian Kurtz, Bethany College*, Estelle L. Miller, Hartford Seminary*, Mr. and Mrs. David Reese, Phillips University, Wanda Singley, Iowa State College. The summer program will begin with a training conference in Michigan the week of June 9-14 followed by eight to ten weeks of Christian service among migratory peoples in the states of Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. (*Missionary candidates)

- A similar service is being planned in the Western Area administered through the office of The Division of Home Missions in Los Angeles. Recruitment of young people from the Disciples is being handled by Robert L. Neal, Director of Christian Education for the Christian Churches of Northern California. The Christian Women's Fellowship under the leadership of Miss Pauline Starn is making a noteworthy financial contribution to undergird our part of the project.

- The names of the young people serving will be available later.

J.A.C.

R.E.M.